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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please reconsider the claims as follows:

- 1 1. (currently amended) A node for processing upstream optical signal and downstream
2 optical signal in a fiber optic communication network, the node comprising:
 - 3 a first optical block including a first device for converting a first upstream optical signal
4 at a first frequency into a first electrical signal, a second device for demodulating from the first
5 electrical signal first information modulated on the first optical signal, a third device for
6 modulating on a second electrical signal second information, a fourth device for converting the
7 second information modulated on the second electrical signal into a second optical signal at the
8 first frequency, a fifth device for providing a third optical signal at a second frequency, the third
9 optical signal having third information modulated on it, a sixth device for multiplexing the
10 second and third optical signals and placing the multiplexed second and third optical signals on
11 the network as upstream optical signal;
 - 12 a second optical block including a first device for converting a first downstream optical
13 signal at a first frequency into a first electrical signal, a second device for demodulating from the
14 first electrical signal first information modulated on the first optical signal, a third device for
15 modulating on a second electrical signal second information, a fourth device for converting the
16 second information modulated on the second electrical signal into a second optical signal at the
17 first frequency, a fifth device for providing a third optical signal at a second frequency, the third
18 optical signal having third information modulated on it, a sixth device for multiplexing the
19 second and third optical signals and placing the multiplexed second and third optical signals on
20 the network as downstream optical signal; and
 - 21 a control device, for processing control information included within said first information
22 of each of said first and second optical block and providing within said second information of
23 each of said first and second optical block control information adapted for use by another node,
24 wherein, in response to a fault that results in disruption of the control information, the control
25 device causes the channels of the first upstream optical signal to be combined with the channels
26 of the first downstream optical signal to provide thereby at least one valid copy of each channel,
27 and in response to no fault that results in disruption of the control information, the control device
28 selects either the first upstream optical signal or the first downstream optical signal based on a
29 relative quality of the optical signals.

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1 2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the network further carries a fourth optical
2 signal at the second frequency, the apparatus further including a seventh device for converting
3 the fourth optical signal into a third electrical signal, and an eighth device for demodulating from
4 the third electrical signal fourth information modulated on the fourth optical signal.

1 3. (original) The apparatus of claim 2 further including a ninth device for providing a fifth
2 optical signal at a third frequency, the fifth optical signal having fifth information modulated on
3 it, the sixth device multiplexing the second, third and fifth optical signals and placing the
4 multiplexed second, third and fifth optical signals on the network.

1 4. (original) The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the network further carries a sixth optical
2 signal at the third frequency, the apparatus further including a tenth device for converting the
3 sixth optical signal into a fourth electrical signal, and an eleventh device for demodulating from
4 the fourth electrical signal sixth information modulated on the sixth optical signal.

1 5. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further including a seventh device for providing a
2 fourth optical signal at a third frequency, the fourth optical signal having fourth information
3 modulated on it, the sixth device multiplexing the second, third and fourth optical signals and
4 placing the multiplexed second, third and fourth optical signals on the network.

1 6. (previously presented) A fiber optic network including the node of claim 1 and further
2 including a second node, the second node including a first device for converting a first optical
3 signal at a first frequency carried by the network into a first electrical signal, the second node
4 further including a second device for demodulating first information from the first electrical
5 signal modulated on the first optical signal, the second node further including a third device for
6 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, and the second node further
7 including a fourth device for converting the second information modulated on the second
8 electrical signal into a second optical signal at the first frequency.

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1 7. (original) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the network further carries a third optical
2 signal at a second frequency, the second node further including a fifth device for converting the
3 third optical signal into a third electrical signal having third information modulated on it.

1 8. (original) The apparatus of claim 7, the second node further including a sixth device for
2 modulating fourth information on a fourth electrical signal, and the second node further
3 including a seventh device for converting the fourth information modulated on the fourth
4 electrical signal into a fourth optical signal at the second frequency and placing the multiplexed
5 second and fourth optical signals on the network.

1 9. (currently amended) A node for receiving upstream optical signal and downstream
2 optical signal in a fiber optic communication network, comprising:

3 a first optical block including a first device for converting a first upstream optical signal
4 at a first frequency into a first electrical signal, a second device for demodulating first
5 information from the first electrical signal modulated on the first optical signal, a third device for
6 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, a fourth device for converting the
7 second information modulated on the second electrical signal into a second optical signal at the
8 first frequency;

9 a second optical block including a first device for converting a first downstream optical
10 signal at a first frequency into a first electrical signal, a second device for demodulating first
11 information from the first electrical signal modulated on the first optical signal, a third device for
12 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, a fourth device for converting the
13 second information modulated on the second electrical signal into a second optical signal at the
14 first frequency;

15 a control device, for processing control information included within said first information
16 of each of said first and second optical block and providing within said second information of
17 each of said first and second optical block control information adapted for use by another node,
18 wherein, in response to a fault that results in disruption of the control information, the control
19 device causes the first information from said first upstream optical signal to be combined with
20 the first information from said first downstream optical signal to provide thereby at least one
21 valid copy of the second information, and in response to no fault that results in disruption of the

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22 control information, the control device selects either the first information from the upstream
23 optical signal or the first information from the first downstream optical signal based on a relative
24 quality of the optical signals.

1 10. (original) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the network further carries a third optical
2 signal at a second frequency, further including a fifth device for converting the third optical
3 signal into a third electrical signal having third information modulated on it.

1 11. (original) The apparatus of claim 10 further including a sixth device for modulating
2 fourth information on a fourth electrical signal, and a seventh device for converting the fourth
3 information modulated on the fourth electrical signal into a fourth optical signal at the second
4 frequency and placing the multiplexed second and fourth optical signals on the network.

1 12. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the fiber optic network includes
2 a closed loop optical fiber, one of the first-mentioned nodes and at least one of the second nodes
3 coupled to the closed loop optical fiber.

1 13. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the fiber optic network includes
2 two closed loop optical fibers for carrying the first optical signal in opposite directions, each
3 node being coupled to both optical fibers.

1 14. (previously presented) The apparatus of any preceding claim 1 wherein the two closed
2 loop optical fibers also carry the third optical signal in the two opposite directions.

1 15. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the fiber optic network includes
2 a closed loop optical fiber, one of the first-mentioned nodes and at least one of the second nodes
3 coupled to the closed loop optical fiber.

1 16. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the fiber optic network includes
2 a closed loop optical fiber, one of the first-mentioned nodes and at least one of the second nodes
3 coupled to the closed loop optical fiber.

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17. (canceled)

18. (canceled)

19. (canceled)

20. (canceled)

1 21. (previously presented) A fiber optic network including the node of claim 2 and further
2 including a second node, the second node including a first device for converting a first optical
3 signal at a first frequency carried by the network into a first electrical signal, the second node
4 further including a second device for demodulating first information from the first electrical
5 signal modulated on the first optical signal, the second node further including a third device for
6 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, and the second node further
7 including a fourth device for converting the second information modulated on the second
8 electrical signal into a second optical signal at the first frequency.

1 22. (previously presented) A fiber optic network including the node of claim 3 and further
2 including a second node, the second node including a first device for converting a first optical
3 signal at a first frequency carried by the network into a first electrical signal, the second node
4 further including a second device for demodulating first information from the first electrical
5 signal modulated on the first optical signal, the second node further including a third device for
6 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, and the second node further
7 including a fourth device for converting the second information modulated on the second
8 electrical signal into a second optical signal at the first frequency.

1 23. (previously presented) A fiber optic network including the node of claim 4 and further
2 including a second node, the second node including a first device for converting a first optical
3 signal at a first frequency carried by the network into a first electrical signal, the second node
4 further including a second device for demodulating first information from the first electrical

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5 signal modulated on the first optical signal, the second node further including a third device for
6 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, and the second node further
7 including a fourth device for converting the second information modulated on the second
8 electrical signal into a second optical signal at the first frequency.

1 24. (previously presented) A fiber optic network including the node of claim 5 and further
2 including a second node, the second node including a first device for converting a first optical
3 signal at a first frequency carried by the network into a first electrical signal, the second node
4 further including a second device for demodulating first information from the first electrical
5 signal modulated on the first optical signal, the second node further including a third device for
6 modulating second information on a second electrical signal, and the second node further
7 including a fourth device for converting the second information modulated on the second
8 electrical signal into a second optical signal at the first frequency.

1 25. (currently amended) A node for processing east-west optical signal and west-east
2 optical signal in a fiber optical communication network, the node comprising:
3 a first optical block adapted to receive control information included within upstream east-
4 west optical signal at a first frequency and transmit control information within downstream east-
5 west optical signal at said first frequency;
6 a second optical block adapted to receive control information included within upstream
7 west-east optical signal at said first frequency and transmit control information within
8 downstream west-east optical signal at said first frequency; and
9 a control device, for processing control information received by each of said first and
10 second optical block and providing within a second information of each of said first and second
11 optical block control information adapted for use by another node, wherein, in response to a fault
12 that results in disruption of the control information, the control device causes the channels of the
13 upstream east-west optical signal to be combined with the channels of the upstream west-east
14 optical signal to provide thereby at least one valid copy of each channel, and in response to no
15 fault that results in disruption of the control information, the control device selects either the
16 channels of the upstream east-west optical signal or the channels of the upstream west-east
17 optical signal based on a relative quality of the optical signals.